Penn President Gutmann

“Creativity is the key to global education in the 21st century and nurturing creativity requires breaking down the walls between disciplines,” said Amy Gutmann, President of the University of Pennsylvania, in an interview with the Chosun Ilbo on a visit to Korea. “It is crucial to promote interdisciplinary education which involves more than one field of study.”

President Gutmann pointed out, “Tackling global issues necessitates knowledge in a variety of areas. In order to address environmental issues, for example, you need not just science but economics and politics. You have to consider economic implications or impacts and at the same time make political decisions. If you want to stave off economic crisis, you should mobilize multiple disciplines such as politics and sociology as well as economics.”

“Penn continues to hire professors who can teach in two or more schools. There are a lot more courses than before and budgets for interdisciplinary studies have been expanded significantly,” added President Gutmann. “The move has proven extremely successful and enabled us to become a destination for a large number of top professors and students.”

On May 23, Penn signed an academic cooperation agreement with Seoul National University. Dr. Gutmann went on to say, “We also started the Korean Studies Program thanks to a generous gift of $6 million (KRW 6.5 billion) from our alumnus James Joo-Jin Kim, Executive Chairman of Amkor Technology. The program brings together politics and other disciplines such as sociology, economics, business and biotechnology.”

President Gutmann received her Ph. D. from Harvard University, and taught and served as the Vice President at Princeton University before taking office as the President of the University of Pennsylvania in 2004.